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of habitation and the continual encroachment of desert sands, till the human region of life and beauty was choked out of existence. When the spread of the higher ideals of humanity is not held as important, the hardening system of national efficiency grows in strength, and at least for some limited period of time it proudly proves itself to be the fittest to survive.

But it is the survival of that part of man which is the least living. And this is the reason why dead monotony is the sign of the spread of the Nation. The modern towns which present the physiognomy of this dominance of the Nation are everywhere the same, from San Francisco to London, from London to Tokio,—they show no faces but merely masks.

The peoples, being living persons, must have their self-expression, and this leads to creations. These creations are literature, art, philosophy, social symbolism and ceremonials. They are different in different peoples, but they are not antagonistic. They are like different dishes in one common feast, adding richness to our enjoyment and understanding of truth. They are making the world of man fertile of life and variedly beautiful.





But the Nations do not create, they merely produce and destroy. Organizations of production are necessary—even the organizations of destruction may be so—but when actuated by greed and hatred they occupy the best part of our world, crowding into a corner the living man who creates, then the harmony is lost and human history runs at a breakneck speed towards fatal catastrophe.

Humanity, where it is living, is guided by inner ideals, but where it is dead organization it is impervious to them. For this organizing endeavour has no growth, but merely augmentation. Therefore its building process is external and it does not fully respond to our inner moral guidance. In this building we can pile up one stone brick upon another and cement them according to our latest scientific recipe. But its foundation is the living nature of man, which cannot suffer such dead weight to be indefinitely loaded upon its heart. Therefore at last, some apparently slight cause makes it move and heave and the huge structure resting upon it sways and cracks. Once it begins to come down we do not know how to stop it. It looks irrational and evil in its sudden course of disruption and mere spouting of

moral maxims or prudent advices is unable to prevent the force of moral gravitation in its action of restoring balance.

The ideal of the social man is unselfishness, but the ideal of the nation is selfishness. Therefore, selfishness in the individual is condemned, but in the nation it is extolled. This leads to a hopeless moral blindness, confusing the religion of the people with the religion of the nation. Therefore we find men convinced of the superior claims of Christianity because Christian nations are in possession of the greater part of the world. It is like supporting a thief's religion by quoting the amount of his stolen property. Nations celebrate their successful massacre of men by thanking God in their churches. They forget that Thugs also ascribed their success in manslaughter to the favour of their goddess. But in the case of the latter their goddess frankly represented the principle of destruction. It was this criminal tribe's own murderous instinct deified; the instinct, not of one individual, but of the whole community, therefore held sacred. In the same manner in modern churches, selfishness, hatred, vanity and greed in their collective aspect of national ins-

tincts do not scruple to share the homage paid to God.

We must admit that evils there are in human nature and in spite of our faith in moral laws and training in self-control they come out in individual cases of unrighteousness. But they carry on their foreheads their own brand of infamy, and their very successes add to their monstrosity.

All through man's history there will be some who will suffer and others who will cause suffering—and the conquest of evil will never be a fully accomplished fact but a continuous process in our civilization, like the process of burning in a flame.

All creation is the harmony of the contradiction between the eternal ideal of perfection and the infinite incompleteness of realization. So long as the positive ideal of goodness keeps step with the negative incompleteness of attainment, so long as there is no absolute separation between them, we need not be afraid of suffering and loss.

Therefore in former ages when some particular people became turbulent and tried to rob others of their human rights, they sometimes



achieved success in their adventures and sometimes failed, and it was nothing more than that. But when this idea of the Nation, which has achieved universal acceptance in the present day, tries to pass off the cult of selfishness as a moral duty simply because that selfishness is gigantic in stature, then it not only commits depredations but attacks the very vitals of humanity. It unconsciously generates in people's minds an attitude of defiance against moral law. For they are taught by repeated devices the lesson that the Nation is greater than the people, and yet this nation scatters to the winds every moral law that the people hold as sacred.

It has been said that a disease becomes most acutely critical when the brain is affected. For it is the brain which is constantly directing the siege against all disease forces. The spirit of national selfishness is that brain disease of a people, which, for the time being, shows itself in red eyes and clenched fists, in violence of talk and movements while all the time shattering its natural system of healing. It is the power of self-sacrifice, the moral faculty of sympathy and co-operation which is the guiding spirit of social vitality. Its function is to

maintain a beneficent relation of harmony with its surroundings. But when it begins to ignore the moral law which is universal, and uses it only within the bounds of a narrow sphere, then its strength becomes like the strength of muscular convulsion, which not being a movement of harmonious health, hurts itself in the end.

What is worse, this moral aberration of peoples, decked with the showy title of patriotism, proudly walks abroad, passing itself off as a highly moral influence. Thus it has spread its inflammatory contagion all over the world, proclaiming its fever-flush to be the best sign of health. It is causing at the hearts of peoples, naturally inoffensive, a feeling of envy at not having their temperature as high as their delirious neighbours, and not being able to cause as much mischief as these others do, but merely having to suffer it.

I have often been asked by my Western friends how to cope with this evil which has attained such sinister strength and dimensions. In fact, I have often been blamed for merely giving warning but offering no alternative. Having been bred in the atmosphere of system-

worship our mind has got into the habit of a superstitious reverence for system. Therefore when we suffer as a result of a particular system we believe that some other system will bring us better luck. We have forgotten this simple truth that all systems produce evil sooner or later when the psychology which is at the root of them is wrong. The system which is national to-day may assume the shape of international to-morrow, but so long as men have not forgotten their idolatry of the baser passions, so long as vanity and greed and jealousy can claim moral sacrifice from us when they assume bulkiness of dimensions, the new system will become a new instrument of suffering to man or at best will become ineffectual. And because we are trained to confound good system with moral goodness itself, every ruined system makes us distrustful of moral law.

Therefore, I do not put my faith in any new institution, but in the drainage of those stagnant moral pollutions which give rise to poisonous vapour. For this we are to look for individuals all over the world who must think clearly, feel nobly and act rightly and thus become the channels of universal moral truth. For this

truth once introduced goes on with its own living creation, overcoming all hindrances. Our moral ideals do not work with chisels and hammers, but like living seeds in proper ground spread their roots in the soil and their branches in the sky without consulting architects for their plans. What is necessary is purity in thought, feeling and will, and the rest will follow.

This is the reason why, when I met Monsieur Richard in Japan, I became more reassured in my mind about the higher era of civilization than when I read about the big schemes which the politicians are formulating for ushering the age of peace into the world. It is not upon mere number or bulk that our salvation depends but upon the truth which can afford to look small. When gigantic forces of destruction were holding their orgies of fury I saw this solitary young Frenchman, unknown to fame, . . . face beaming with the lights of the new dawn and his voice vibrating with the message of new life, and I felt sure that the great To-morrow has already come though not registered in the Calendar of the statesmen.

*January 17, 1917.*      RABINDRANATH TAGORE.



TO THE NATIONS







# TO THE NATIONS'

## THE FALSITY OF YESTERDAY

AND now, if we were to tell the truth? . . .

If in this world of deceptions, we called frankness to the rescue; if we looked at facts as they are, whatever they may be? . . .

Are, then, the men who prefer darkness to light still so numerous? Let us leave the business of deceiving to those who make a profession of it. They live on trickery and falsehood. But the others—all the others—are dying of that. They are wearied of dying of that. And the day is coming, it has already come, when the peoples, tired of being dupes and victims, will

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seek their salvation in Truth. The day is coming when men, tired of being led like sheep to slaughter, will choose as their leaders the men of Truth.

The truth—the war has made it heard through the voice of all its guns. Who can remain deaf hereafter? It is destroying all the falsehoods, beginning with those which peace concealed.

“Peace” had come to imply a state of things which permitted the big nations to treat the little nations as they pleased. And the big nations called themselves peaceful when, not wishing to wage war with the strongest, they contented themselves with making war—without too many risks—on the weakest.

Events have shown them that this could not go on for long. For war on the weak has finally, as its consequence and sanction, the terrible encounter of the strong.

Thus great Justice wills. This world is a closed circle; everything in it rebounds: each act reacts on those who commit it. Nothing is lost, all is summed up. Each violence prepares another. Force calls to itself force, as the thunder-cloud attracts the thunder-cloud. And that is why Europe has seen break forth on her the

same scourge that so many times and in so many places she let loose on others.

Men must have been blind not to have seen, overshadowing and impending, the terrible cloud which Europe herself had gathered.

Which belligerent of the great war, from this point of view, can declare himself innocent? Whose hands are clean of blood?

Each one of the nations which are at grips could, if disengaged from the partialities of its own ideas of justice, follow, step by step, the track of the events which led it to the catastrophe, and see what a logical and stern fatality connects this catastrophe with its own acts.

The Morocco War—to take but this instance—had it not as a necessary corollary the war in Tripoli, which, in weakening Turkey, was in its turn to let loose the Balkans, and thus set Austria and Russia by the throat and produce the great European conflict?

Even those who are in appearance most innocent of responsibility are not so in reality.

It is true that while some make use of the right of force, others make use of the force of right. But whatever the words their mouths may utter,

their claws are visible all the while, closing over the living prey for which, without confessing it, each one is fighting.

To hear them—the oppressed nations never had so many defenders. Each one wishes to liberate those nations oppressed by the others. Germany and Russia vie with one another as to who shall deliver Poland. Alsace and Ireland, Serbia, Egypt, Belgium or India, all have their champions somewhere. And, in truth, all their champions are liberating them while killing one another.

There is the root of the evil, the true cause of the war. Some indeed wished for it, thinking to find their profit in it; but all prepared for it and rendered it inevitable.

It is the logical expected result of selfish politics and unscrupulous ambition, the necessary product of material greed, the just price for the shameless or hypocritical iniquities of all. For all fostered in themselves, whether apparent or concealed, the same demon and the same beast of prey.

It is the war of the hungry for conquest against those gluttoned with conquest. Appetites were

unequal : capacities of eating were varied. But by dint of exercising them they have ended in meeting. The earth is small. And now they are devouring one another.

This war is the final settlement of accounts around all the plunder of the earth; the last affray of all the drunkenness and all the thirsts, ending the orgy of the Powers.

It is the lesson that the peoples of the present are giving to the peoples of the future, showing the path of shame, of ruin and of death.

And this is not the only lesson of the war.

## THE ILLUSION OF TO-DAY

THIS war was not only inevitable but necessary, and it may be said, willed by the Will of the future.

This bankruptcy of diplomacy was needed, to clear the sky of Europe from the lies which were infecting it.

This ruin of the great nations was needed, not to liberate the world from this or that power of domination to the profit of the others, but to liberate it from the very state of mind which was dominating it.

This foundering of a civilization, vain-glorious and false, was needed, so that the upward striving of human life could free itself from the barbarous mechanism and commercialism by which it was shut in, and humanity could go forward.

This hell was needed, for the conversion of the peoples who let it loose.

This chaos was needed, that out of the old

order a new order might be born, a new heaven and a new earth come forth.

These are the true stakes of the war, and not those for which the belligerents are contending.

Each one believes in "his" victory. Therein lies the illusion of to-day. What meaning can this word "victory" have in this war of mutual exhaustion and extermination? The more the common shedding of blood and of gold is prolonged, the more the red flow of all the life forces is spread wide, the more such a word as "victory" becomes absurd.

How many victories there must be on both sides in order to assure the defeat of all. They may announce and publish their triumphs, celebrate them and fill the world with the report of their glory, yet they will not prevent the terrible reality of the general suicide from destroying them all as it advances day by day. For each day of this war, whatever may be the gains or losses of one side or the other, represents a fresh disaster for all.

Indeed, the pretensions to domination of the world will be overthrown. This can certainly be predicted. But the cold ambitious calculations will be frustrated also. That is no less certain.

The only gains and the only victories that can be expected of this war are not those that they hoped for, but those that their common ruin will assure to human progress.

While the governments of the belligerents are sustaining this illusion of "victory" in the minds of the people, they nourish themselves with that still greater illusion of a possible return, after the war, to the state of things, to the state of mind which prevailed before. They flatter themselves that after this tremendous adventure they can resume their petty occupations. They count on finding again to-morrow the same "peace" which they were keeping yesterday. In this they are as grossly deceived as when, day after day, while preparing the catastrophe themselves, they imagined they could avoid it.

No, the gulf is fixed between that which was and that which henceforth will be possible. The torrent will not turn back. And this war will not lead them where they desired.

Do they imagine that the events which are shaking the world are without import for the future, that the supreme experience which the



nations are now undergoing will be without profit for them, and its great lesson without fruit for others, that so much suffering and heroism, so many crimes even, so many sacrifices, such a bloody holocaust of nations; and all those tears and all that blood will have no other effect than to give them free license to begin again tomorrow their work of yesterday?

Will the scourge which is striking down so many men and things, leave only these men and these things standing? Will not the plow which is tilling the earth to open it for the new harvests, uproot the old stubble?

Enough of illusions. The peace which is coming will not be that expected by selfish interests. For the war which they are making on each other, the war which the powers are waging, is above all the war which the Power of the future is waging on them all.

If the war be the result of the faults of all, it is also the result of the forces which are working for the progress of all. It is their stroke of the battering ram against the obstacle which had to be broken. Those who declared war did but obey the order of fate, which condemned

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them. Some are making use of the names of Right and Justice—but in vain. It is the Right and Justice violated by them all which is forcing them to this hand-to-hand struggle, and they will only emerge from it by becoming more upright and more just.

For this war will last in some form or another, followed by some other war, or some other thing if needful, until the god of this corruption of the human which is the present mutually destructive social order, cries for mercy ; so that a new order based on mutual service may be born. Yes, this civil war of Europe will become, if necessary, a civil war in each of the nations of Europe. It may precipitate the whole of humanity against itself, but it will not cease before what had to be done is done, before the consciousness of humanity is awakened in the nations.

That is why, as nothing was able to prevent it—for it was time that it came to put its red hot iron on the wound of the world—so until now nothing and no one has been able to stay it, for it could not be that the world should suffer in vain.

Look at the events from this point of view. Then you will understand them. You will see

the blindness of contrary and self-interested prejudices. You will understand the character and the "raison d'être" of this great shock where everything seemed to be calculated for the long duration that none believed in, and the final wearing out that none wished for.

You will understand that which is hidden but must be seen behind appearances; and beyond what is disappearing, that which must be waited and willed for: the Future which is on its way—something or some one whose mighty conquering footstep is shaking the world to its foundations.

## THE REALITIES OF TO-MORROW

TO-MORROW : one more step forward in the night, towards the dawn, one more step on the hard path leading from the abyss to the summit, the path that humanity ascends as a Calvary, with bleeding feet. . . .

How could it be otherwise? Mere vulgar optimism and pessimism close their eyes to that which will be. Neither one nor the other has the commanding stature to measure what is coming. For, this surpasses the shortsightedness of private or national interests. Only in looking from the heights is it possible to see from afar.

To-morrow ; it will perhaps be the end of the war. But it will not be the end of the crisis. It will be its extension and probably its aggravation. There could apparently be no hope unless everything went from bad to worse until all is transformed. The best must come forth from the worst. But we have not yet reached that worst.

For, the war is only a preface. And *its* end,

whatever that may be, is not what matters most. That which matters is what will follow after, the events that will come to complete its work.

Indeed, ill chance might have made the war cease before these events were sufficiently prepared. But this ill chance did not come about. Henceforth they are as inevitable as was the war itself. They are its logical consequences. And if nothing until now was able to prevent or interrupt the war, who could now stay their necessary course? Some of them can be predicted with certainty from now,—with more certainty than the end of the war itself. For that end...

In truth, there is a possibility that the war may cease suddenly, as it began, without anyone knowing exactly how or why. If the death of a grandduke was sufficient to provoke the war, why should not some circumstance or other be sufficient to end it, when least expected?

There is also a possibility that it will in no way finish, at least as is generally understood; that in place of the state of peace, purely nominal, which prevailed before, there will henceforth be substituted a permanent and more or less effective state of war, a sort of *status quo*, such

as is already practised by some belligerents resting on their oars, who could be called the "associates" of the war.

At any rate, what is certain is that this war will not have an ending like that of any other war: no other ending than that of the present order of things itself. For this war will last as long as is necessary to prevent any chance of the survival of that which preceded it.

Madness comes quicker than it goes. Fate, willing the perdition of the nations of Europe, first made demented those who wished for war, and then acted in the same way towards those who now wish to go "jusqu'au bout." Therefore they have tied their hands, one to the other, insuring themselves mutually, through treaties, against any chance of peace. Thus the equilibrium of the contrary forces is constituted in such a way that its solidity can defy all shocks. It can be broken in many places without being shaken in its entirety. This can last for a long time.

Moreover, the longer the war goes on, the more the reasons for waging it increase, some being less and less desirous of losing what they have gained, and others more and more desirous

of regaining what they have lost. Thus the duration itself of the war augments its chance of being prolonged. The further it advances the further its end recedes.

It is as yet but the war of lasting hopes; if ever it becomes the war of lasting despairs, its end will not be any nearer.

There was indeed a strong obstacle to the duration of this war. It was the economical obstacle. The nations surmounted it light-heartedly.

It is true, the economists were not mistaken when they predicted that the war could not last for more than a few months without causing the ruin of the belligerents. But they were mistaken in thinking that this ruin would prevent their going on fighting for years. They may cry as much as they please now, "Peace or ruin," the nations will not stop. They no longer have the choice. They are long since ruined, and more than they realize. But the more they are ruined the less it matters. It is now ruin which is pushing them to war, more than war which is pushing them to ruin. And the greater the loss, the greater also becomes the desperation to play the supreme game.



The nearer the governments of Europe are to the end of their resources, the greater their desire to risk their last chance. As long as they have men to sacrifice, their armies will remain face to face, guarding the moving frontiers outlined by their front of trenches. For the war is now for them a question of life or death. They know it cannot cease without bringing for them the day of reckoning for all the betrayed illusions and disappointed hopes. Yes, they will delay it "jusqu' au bout," having at least a chance of life as long as the peoples consent to die.

Now, is not to-morrow the day of these peoples?

If in the meantime, by some miracle of military or scientific genius, by some still more infernal discovery, some surprise of fate, so-called peace and victory should become possible, would that finish the war?

As long as the state of things which gave it birth remains unchanged, it will be born again out of its own ashes. Peace will be but a truce, victory but an opportunity for fresh conflicts, and that probably between the allies of yesterday. For nothing is as perilous as a

settlement of accounts between ruined and armed peoples. . . .

And then, there are also other nations in the world, armed and well armed. There are other egoisms, other lusts and other budding ambitions awaiting their turn.

There are the outlawed nations who are awaiting their hour.

To-morrow, is it not for them the expected day ?—the last day of the things that are dying, after which may begin the new week of the world.

## THE DAY OF THE CAPTIVES

IN the gradual advance of the herd of the world's peoples, the nations of Europe have served as watch-dogs. They played their part eagerly, harshly. They were without mercy for the laggards. They fastened their fangs sharply into the live flesh. If the watch-dogs had not ended by fighting with one another, what would have stayed their devouring zeal?

If the watch-dog nations had remained united in their complicity they would have chained the world, paralyzed its energies of free growth, and absorbed its forces to glut themselves withal.

Have we not seen what they were capable of doing, when their allied armies, in 1900, ravaged Peking and committed, under Germany's leadership, the same atrocities with which they now reproach her.

At that moment Europe's possible suzerainty over the rest of the world was brought to judgment; and it was doomed. Her force having be-

come a menace to that progress which it was her mission to serve, has been shattered, her power of domination divided and turned against herself, her equilibrium destroyed for the benefit of the equilibrium of the world.

For the peoples, on their slow way towards progress, are sometimes the arm which strikes, and sometimes the flesh which groans. They goad one another on, the weapons of the strong stimulating the weak. In turn they are masters and slaves,—in turn, for no one of them remains always master or always slave. A day of deliverance comes for all.

For this war is, in truth, a war of liberation, but not in the sense understood by those who are waging it. While holding under their yoke whole races, they want to set free from the yoke of others this or that little nationality. They are fighting against the imperialism of others. And it is just those who are least willing to accept such a tyranny for themselves, who impose it the most heavily on the conquered peoples.

It is not certain that the war will liberate the small enslaved nations of Europe so soon, but it is certain that it is hastening from day to day



the deliverance of the great enslaved peoples of Africa and Asia.

Will they be the only ones who have no thirst for life, and free life, these great peoples of Arab tongue and race, who have been liberated with such gratuitous care from the disheartening tutelage of Turkey, these great peoples that a common fate even more than a common faith unifies in one mass of impatient hopes from the Atlantic to the Red Sea, and from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf?

All these peoples,—Arabia and Egypt and the others, from Tripoli to Morocco,—only await a leader to become one great nation. The leader, the hero long-looked-for by a race, always comes. He comes and comes again, until he triumphs.

And India, the mother of us all, India, the breast of the world—for which nation has she not suckled?—will not she too find freedom?

However diverse these peoples may be, they are now unified through common suffering. One same soul lives in them all, conscious of the great past, and also of the free future. And this soul knows that to-morrow is the day it has been awaiting for a century. It is not in prohibiting their sacred books, in imprisoning those who read

the Bhagavad Gita, in treating their Sages as malefactors, that it is possible to delay the hour of the approaching Destinies...And this hour will open a new era, an era of uplifting for all humanity.

The adult nations will learn to treat no longer with contumely the aged races they oppress, and with pitilessness the infant nations they torture.

Belgian Congos will be no more.

How could Europe, who has so many slaves in the world, be without any at home? She has old slaves and new ones, too, at home.

For, by a cruel irony, this war of liberation first of all enslaved in Europe itself the nations who were free until now.

Never, for instance, did Serbia undergo such an extreme fate as since the fight has been started to protect her. Would she ever have undergone it otherwise?

The day of grace will also come for all these captives, old or new. It will come, not when their official protectors have vanquished for them the enemy from without, but when, to-morrow, all the nations of Europe, including their oppressors, have together overwhelmed the far worse

enemy—the common enemy who makes them slaves within. For all are slaves.

This will be the last day of the war, the day of the peoples ; the great Eve, after which all the nations of Europe, small and big, whether vanquished or not, will see the breaking of the great Dawn.



## THE GREAT EVE

THERE will be revolutions in most of the countries of Europe. This is what everyone is saying and expecting. And the governments are blind indeed if they do not know it. Even if they refuse to know it, yet, as they feel it subconsciously, they fear it. When their actions are watched this fact becomes patent.

The expectation of revolutions is not the least of the reasons for the excessive duration of the war. But the longer the war lasts, the less it has any other possible issue. Everything seems calculated to work out to this conclusion.

For the war has a purpose, even if the belligerents have none. It has a purpose to which none of them would care to attain, but which all will be forced to realize at last. This purpose is very simple : the old evil must be destroyed down to its root ; the old foundations of the life of the peoples must be torn up, and replaced by the foundations of a better and truer civilization. The sword of Europe must continue to turn against itself until

it pierces in the heart of each nation, the monster which is hidden there and must be slain.

Thus only can peace be signed between different *peoples*. But it will not be signed between the peoples of Europe and their governments.

The governments themselves are not the disease from which the people suffer. But they represent it, express it and give it a body. They incarnate it. It is in the doings of its rulers that the hidden voice of a people appears. And when a people repudiates its vice, it repudiates, at the same time, all that recalls it to its eyes. The idols it breaks at the time of its conversion are neither guilty nor responsible. Yet it breaks them.

The governments could only escape this retribution by being the first to become converted; by acknowledging and confessing the true causes of the anguish of the peoples; by destroying these causes in themselves. But which government in Europe is capable of thus making amends? Its solidarity with all the others would in itself prevent this.

Therefore it is the peoples of Europe themselves who will take the necessary action. They will do

this on the day they learn all that is now being hidden from them.

Up to the present they know only the truth of death. About all the rest they have heard only lies,—lies about the motives for the war, lies about its results, lies about its objects and its sequence, lies about that which was, and is, and will be ; lies that truth will one day scatter to the winds.

That will be the great Eve, the Eve which will put an end to the war, or immediately follow its end, and transform it into another, the only war which can be the last of all. For it will be waged against the very things from which war is born, against the state of things which makes it possible. That will be the great Eve of all that must die, the revenge of the dead.

How could it be otherwise,—looking only at the most evident and irresistible facts ?

O, Governments of Europe, can you hide from the peoples to-morrow this reality of hopeless disillusionment, all the greater because of the falsity of the prospects with which you deluded them ? Can you hide this from them when the whole scaffolding of illusions, which you had erected to-

blind their eyes, breaks down? Can you hide from them to-morrow this reality of ruin, when after having gone to death, they must come back and live? And live how, and on what?

Can you hide the truth from them when you impose the impossible burden of your debts on their impoverished numbers and exhausted powers? Can you hide the truth from them when all the blood that remains to them must be turned into sweat of taxation? Can you hide the fifty thousand millions they owe to-day, the hundred thousand millions they will owe to-morrow?

Do you wish them to raise this mound that is crushing you, in order to save you, or bury themselves with you? They will prefer to stand on the top of it themselves, and dance there the terrible dance of all your old hopes, as you stood and danced it yourselves on the mound of their corpses!

And can you hide from them the reason, the one reason, of this ruin,—your insatiable lust for lucre, your greed for wealth and power, your pride and your injustice, your inhuman rapacity?

How can they but discover that therein lies the

hidden poison that is killing them ? And having discovered it, how can they do otherwise than spit it out of their mouths ?

When they suddenly get the vision of those international chessboards, on which, between neighbours, you played their bodies and their goods ; when they realize that the so-called State is but the pompous title of a shady agency, to which they lend, without knowing it, the credit and guarantee of their signatures written in blood ; when they know what syndicates of private interests govern them, what business transactions were hidden behind the big words with which their heroism was spurred on, what profits were calculated on the number of their killed ; then, oh then, those peoples you are now goading on to one another like dogs on the quarry, will all turn round and rend you. Together they will rise to destroy that hundred-headed vulture of national egotism which is devouring them.

Poor, ignorant peoples, easily deluded, herd of slaves destined to the games of the arena, herd led to slaughter, none of whom wished for war. They went to war, constrained by force,

confiding in those who are the cause of their loss, intoxicated by them with the poisoned wine of hate.

They went to war without understanding. But it is in vain that their masters have stated in a thousand false ways the problem of their misery, through the last two years; they themselves have now stated it in its real terms: "How is it that while the immense majority of men in all countries ask but to live by work and peace, all, in every country are thus thrown headlong into war? Why and by whom? Who, then, in every country, thus makes of them their brothers' murderers?"

They will not come back without having found the answer to that riddle. And which of them now ignores it? It is not yet known what kind of soul this hell has formed in them. They will come out of it changed men. But whether saints or demons, they will all curse alike that which is responsible for this hell, and crush that under their feet.

Why should they show mercy to a state of things which shows mercy to none, which might lead their sons after them from the same peace to the same war, and to the same hell?

## THE DAWN

SUCH is the truth of the war, the truth that must be perceived through the chaos of things, and proclaimed above the tumult of events.

This war would have no sense, if it had not this sense of the future.

No liberal sense,—in both camps are the same imperialisms and despotisms, interior or colonial. With what can “Czarism” reproach “Kaiserism,” or “Junkerism” reproach “Jingoism”?

No religious sense,—on both sides Protestants and Catholics invoke their God against the co-religionists facing them, while schismatics or Mohamedans join one party or the other indiscriminately. Never before has religion counted for so little.

No ethnical sense,—the most alien races are neighbours in the same alliance, and the nearest of kin confront one another with the same hate. As for the kings,—they are all (save the Grand Turk) of the same blood.

# TO THE NATIONS

*From the French of*  
PAUL RICHARD

With an Introduction by  
Rabindranath Tagore



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No economical sense,—the ruin of all is assured, to the apparent profit of the neutrals.

Lastly, no military sense,—the only possible issue is the defeat of all, in this deadly duel, in which each adversary proclaims himself victor till his last gasp.

It is necessary to look deeper. For behind the drama that is being played, a still greater one is unfolding. This war is the war of the invisible things, behind the *mêlée* of the visible. It is the war which the old order is waging against itself, in throwing the forces of violence and of fraud one against the other, to their mutual destruction.

It is a great sight to see how Europe, after having received, through centuries of greatness, the reward of her effort, is now paying to all her peoples the salary of their iniquities.

It seems as though she had kindled this immense conflagration in order to become entirely purified through it, as though she wished for death in order to be born again, transformed.

For beyond the Europe which is dying, there is another Europe which is preparing to live.

And it is to a better future that she is offering this sacrifice of her riches, this holocaust of her blood.

If it were not so, the great Eve which is coming would be for her the prelude of the great night into which sink all dead peoples and corrupt civilizations,—that starless night, still deeper than the darkness from which they emerged.

For in this breaking down of all that was, she must hereafter choose, either the long dwelling in the lowest regions of the abyss, in the oblivion of decadence, amidst the ruins, or else the reconstruction of a new world. A cataclysm has closed up the old paths,—now, either the fall in the darkness, or the soaring towards the Dawn!

The Dawn. It is not the return of the preceding day; it is the coming to light of that which never yet has been,—the promise of a future that will not resemble what has gone before. Too often the future is but a lingering past. While its shadow still remains over us, it is not yet the Dawn.

Which nations will be the first to come out of

this shadow? It may be that those who have been the first to let loose the storm, will have first understood its lesson,—at any rate, those who are the first to be taught by the common defeat.

For this defeat will lie heavy on all, until in all, the spirit which is leading them repents. They will feel the law of death reigning over them, until they have discovered a higher reason for living,—until they have accepted a new law of life.

For the dilemma confronting the nations is always the same,—either to remain as they are, and suffer what they are suffering, or else to be renewed to the depths of their inmost being.

The question, in fact, is not to alter a few interior or exterior habits, a few superficial modes of existence. The overthrow of a whole world cannot find its end in mere administrative or diplomatic modifications, in a change of constitution or of staff. Such things could not suffice to alter their destinies.

Of what use would it be to change men, if things did not change, or to change things, if men remained the same? It is the very spirit in men and in things which must be altered. It is the

soul in each nation which must be transformed. It is the consciousness of a new world which must be born in all.

In all nations there are men, lost in the crowd, who bear in themselves this consciousness of a new world. They belong no more to the departing century. They seem to come from the future.

They are but few, though many follow them from afar, and draw nearer to them every day. Many already, who feel their illusions being shattered and their hates fading away, are receiving in themselves the first rays of an unexpected dawn. As time advances, their numbers increase. To-morrow, they will be the multitude in each nation.

Let them unite over the old barriers. For they are in all nations, the sons of the same spiritual motherland. Let them unite in a common attempt to raise up maimed Europe from her deep fall. Let them call forth from the ruins of the Europe of yesterday the Europe of to-morrow. And if this new Europe tarries in replying to their appeal, let them proclaim the great message to all the continents where good-will is still to

be found. Let them salute the Dawn over the East before she shines on the West.

In all the peoples, there are men who are not men of one nation only ; for they serve Humanity. Higher than duty to country, they place duty to Humanity. It is to them that mankind now looks for the wages of all its labors, the fruit of all its suffering.

Let them arise to announce to the peoples the law of justice ; for this law must reign in the society of the nations, as it reigns in the society of the families ; this law must unite nations which are the citizens of the world, as it unites men who are the citizens of the nations. Let them all unite to inaugurate the Peace of Man. Let them accomplish the wish of the Future and the promise of the Past. For behold, all generations, —those which were and those which are to come, —turn their eyes towards this generation of to-day. It is this generation which must fulfil the great hope of the centuries. And this hope, —after a crisis such as never was before in history,—is the hope of a day such as never yet dawned for Humanity.

## PART TWO

### THE LAW OF THE PEOPLES

WHETHER willingly or not, the peoples live on earth in society.

Each of them forms, in humanity, a real individuality, a collective being, living and acting.

Unfortunately the mind of those collective individualities has not yet gone beyond the level of animal life and consciousness. Their association together has been till now a society, not of human beings, but of more or less wild animals. The most evolved have become beasts of prey.

It is not without reason that the symbolical emblems which they themselves have chosen for their own representation are those of fierce animals like the lion, the eagle, the bear, and the leopard, or those of less powerful, but not less quarrelsome animals, such as the cock.

Up to the present, the only law which has determined the relations between peoples has been

that which rules the appetites of the beast,—the law of force, the law of war.

It is time that, in so far as they are a collective being, they should pass beyond the animal stage in order to become, on reaching the human stage, real moral persons.

There is only one moral law for men and for peoples. Each nation must impose on itself the same rule that it imposes on the individual,—the same moral law governs them both. Whatever is a crime for the individual is also a crime for his country. If selfishness, cupidity, robbery, violence and murder are looked upon as vile and degrading acts for isolated men, how should the collective man, that is, the nation, commit such acts without dishonour? In what does the honour of a nation differ from the honour of an individual? And of what use is it for a nation to assert this “honour” and defend it with her arms if she herself continually violates it, in face of all, by her practices of plunder and her acts of disloyalty? The honour of a man does not lie in his strength. Neither does the honour of a nation. It lies in the use to which the man and the nation put the strength. Honour does

not consist in being rich. It consists in the spirit and manner in which riches are acquired and employed. Honour does not consist in control of others, but in self-control. It consists in self-respect and respect for our fellow-men.

Men of honour are to be found in every nation, but what nation does not constantly fail in honour? And when will the nations cease to boast of the very thing that degrades them? . . .

The rule of conduct for the individual was to act in such a way that his actions could always be held up as an example for all.

It is this same moral rule which must be kept by the nation, which should act in such a way that each one of its actions can be held up as an example for the individual.

Otherwise, what right would it have to complain of its criminals, and to punish them with such severity? A country has only the criminals it deserves.

Why should the citizen be more honest than his country? And how is it that, up to the present, individuals have accepted condemnation for the same acts as those in which the mother-country glories? Or rather, how is it that they have



allowed their rulers to commit, in the very name of the mother-country, acts which would be infamous in citizens?

The mother-country must set the example. If it is shameful for the individual to treat the weak with contumely and to use his strength against the defenceless, then the mother-country ought not to do these things.

If it is shameful for the individual to spy on his neighbour, to betray his host, and break his given word, then the mother-country ought not to do these things.

If it is shameful for the individual to obtain profit through fraud or threat, or to secure it by violence, then the mother-country ought not to do these things.

And the citizen, if he be a patriot, cannot and must not permit these things, or approve of them. He cannot and must not become their accomplice, or their agent, even if he were to receive for it the wages of an ambassador.

Everyone is speaking of patriotism. And it is right to do so. Patriotism must be exalted. It must be ennobled, not debased. For too often it is but a low and coarse thing.

The native land is the preëminent mother. But who would wish his mother to be brutal and cruel, to be a liar and a thief?

Yet in every country there are patriots who are never so proud as when this mother has appropriated the possessions and territories of others, violated and perhaps slaughtered some weak and less well-armed nation and reduced to slavery defenceless populations. Patriots are seen swelling with pride when their country, their mother, has committed one of those very acts which would make them die of shame, had their own sons been guilty of it!

True patriotism is not of this kind. It does not consist in constantly inciting the country, like a blood-hound, to hunt and murder; nor in applauding it, when it comes back from the chase, carrying some new prey in its jaws.

The true patriots are those who blush at the things which fill others with vanity; who mourn over the mother-country when she enriches herself with ill-gotten gains. For to them she appears, not greater, but poorer, stripped of her true riches and beauty, and only clad with the rags of her moral destitution.

Where are these true patriots in all coun-

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tries; those who love their mother-country well enough to wish her honest and pure, to allow nothing to degrade her, and never to suffer her face to be splashed with blood and mire?

These are elementary matters. And doubtless we are still very barbarous to be obliged to consider common moral rules such as these as though they were ideals. But we must begin at the beginning. The first step must be taken. Therein lies the progress of to-day.

What the individual is in the family, the family in the city, the city in the province, and the province in the country, that must the country now become in the society of the nations.

It must learn to live, not for itself, but for that which is greater. Therein lies, for nations as well as men, the true moral law, and the only way of salvation.

Each nation will henceforth experience the fact—those of Europe have already done so—that outside this way of salvation, all the ways it may follow lead to death.

## THE IDEAL OF THE PEOPLES

THE greatness of a man or a nation is measured by the greatness of an ideal . . . on the condition of its realization. For the ideal is but too often that which is professed, in opposition to that which is practised.

What was the ideal of the world that is dying? Judging by what it professed, never did more noble principles shine in the sky of humanity: Liberty, Justice, Science, Progress, Civilization. . . . But judging by what it practised, never was the abyss deeper between fact and ideal.

What have the peoples, who call themselves great, made of Liberty? A monopoly for themselves. And those who make most use of its name are also those who grant it the least to others. They wish the liberty of reducing the world to slavery.

What have they made of Justice? A guarantee for their own interests. But the rights of

others were only measured in their eyes, by the measure of force.

What have they made of Science? A tool to serve their greeds. History will say of them: They acquired much knowledge, but they put it to evil purpose.

What have they made of Progress? A soulless thing, an egoistical and material means of domination.

What have they made of Civilization? A privilege calculated on the number of their fire-arms. A hypocritical pretext covering their worst undertakings. A mask of fraud.

What have they made of Humanity? A field for profits, a business market. They have treated the nations as possessions to be bought and sold, as cattle to be reared for food.

And that is why the light of all these great words is changed into the murky blood-red flame of this immense conflagration.

The old ideal of the peoples was greatness. But this ideal was small. For this greatness was material. Nothing counted save what could be counted.

They wished themselves great by power and

by riches, by the power that money gives, and by the money that power gives. They wished themselves great by the number and extent of their territories. For the possession of territories procures both power and money. Therefore they sacrificed everything for what they call their interests. For that, they have sacrificed their life itself.

Acquire and conquer: such was their programme. They have carried it through. They have divided the earth among them. What more could they do? What but begin the sharing again by reducing the number of sharers; aggrandize themselves still more by forcing their way through one another? That is what they are attempting now.

As long as there can be found on earth nations possessed of the same insatiable desire of material extension, they will act thus. Even if but two remained face to face, they would continue to kill each other.

Is not then this experience sufficient? And must it always be renewed? How many empires in the past were rich, powerful and conquering whose ruins now make landmarks on the blind endless path where those of to-day have

wished to follow them. Will they know now to what they are led by this frenzy for power, this greed of gain? . . .

The world which is dying has taken possession of the domain of matter. That is right: humanity must also possess this domain. But because the ambition of this dying world was limited to the material, because it had made of this narrow goal a limit, it crushed itself against it. For the will of Nature is to go further. She wills to lead the nations higher. And only the nations who follow her towards the new ideal will be able to live!

The true measure of greatness is not space. True greatness is not of the kilometric kind. The ideal for a nation is to grow, not in surface, but in height. It is not the soil a nation occupies, but the men and women of whom it is composed, that must grow. It is not their numbers, but their value, which must increase. The greatest country, be its boundaries narrow or vast, is that in which humanity reaches its highest stature.

Who would not prefer to be a citizen of the smallest country in the world, if it were



noble and beautiful, rather than a citizen of the most gigantic of our colonial empires? Who would not prefer the Athens of Plato to the Rome of Caligula?

Neither are riches the ideal. For money is not the measure of true value. For a nation, true riches are not the gold that glitters, but the genius which shines. Its true riches are those which it adds to the treasure of all. A nation is rich, when it discovers some new principle of progress, when it inaugurates some higher mode of living. It is rich, not when it heaps up the things which already exist but when it creates those which were not in existence before, when it increases the benefits of the race, and extends the consciousness of humanity.

Finally, power is not the ideal: the only legitimate power is that which gives men happiness. The strength which imposes itself is not the measure of true power: the true conquest, the only lasting conquest, is that of mind and soul; true power is that of radiance. The one true glory, for a nation, is to enlighten the world.

Indeed, strength, riches, and material dimen-

sions are good and great things, but only on condition of service to the higher ideal. And the very rivalries of the nations will be fruitful only when they dispute for the honour of realizing the ideal.

For nations, the ideal seems to be the opposite of self-interest. For it is disinterested. But for them, that which is disinterested is in reality the supreme interest, beyond all others.

For the ideal is that which the Future aims at realizing. The ideal of to-day is the reality of to-morrow. Thus, so far as a nation serves the ideal, it makes an alliance with the Future. It assures and prepares for its own future. In as far as it realizes those things called Liberty, Justice, Progress, it realizes itself. When, on the contrary, a nation forgets and turns away from them, only seeking its own selfish interests, it turns away from that future, and enters into conflict with it. Now, in this conflict, even the strongest end always by perishing. And that is why, one after another, great though they were, all the selfish empires have been destroyed. And among those of to-day, which shall survive?

No nation lives for itself. No nation lives but

through the services it renders to Humanity. As long as it remains of service to Humanity it remains alive. Even if it thinks only of itself, even if it seeks but its own ends, yet as far as these ends involuntarily serve the general interest, it is tolerated. But when it ceases to be of any service at all, the force which sustained it withdraws: it withers and disappears; for Humanity rejects it.

To-morrow, the nations will know those laws which the terrible destinies are teaching them to-day. No nation will be foolish enough to transgress them. But which of the nations will be first to have the wisdom to understand and the glory to realize them? Which will be the great people, forever blessed, who will first give the example to all others; which will make Humanity its highest aim of life, Disinterestedness its supreme law, the Ideal its safeguard, and the Future its ally?

## THE PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLES

THE hundred countries which share the earth are the hundred provinces of the world. The hundred peoples who inhabit them are the hundred families of Humanity. But no one of them thinks of that, each one thinks only of itself.

In fact most of them ignore one another. They do not think about living in society. Each leads in its own way its small particular life, wishing that life to be untroubled and undisturbed. They call progress that which is favourable to their habits. They are the provincials of the earth.

Others on the contrary have a more extensive acquaintance. Their egoism is not sedentary. They are interested in the rest of the world, because they have interests there. Nothing happens in the world, without their taking part and finding profit in it. They are not numerous: scarcely a dozen. But they are very cumbersome. And as they meet everywhere, their interests in clashing or uniting have

ended by forming two or three antagonistic groups, two or three rival syndicates. These live in society,—in small societies of big nations. They call progress that which favours their ambitions.

It is very fortunate for the others that, up to the present, these syndicates have remained rivals. For though a federation of just and wise nations governing the earth would be desirable, a combine of despotic nations exploiting it in common would be undesirable. Yet the creation of a United States of Europe would doubtless have come to that, given the spirit which inspired each one of the disunited States. The world war has put an end for a long time to come to that dream of a world trust.

Thus the nations live in that state of anarchic individualism which they so severely condemn in the individual. They only abandon it to become slaves or accomplices of one another. Their sovereignty means that they recognize nothing above them. They only recognize their “sacred” egoism,—destroyer of the others and of themselves.

For egoism is the latent conflict of all against

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all. It always ends in a brutal conflict. Even while wishing for peace, selfishness makes war inevitable. Groups and alliances are helpless before it, save that through them the mêlée becomes general.

It is called "barbarism" only when the arms are not of the latest pattern. The distinctive sign of the "civilized" is the "armed peace," which does not exclude war on the weak, and consists essentially in the making of more and more murderous machines in view of the next turn of affairs.

While certain scientific men are occupied with this, men still more scientific make it their task to demonstrate that the law of conflict, of selection and of survival of the fittest, which rules certain facts of animal evolution, necessarily governs that of human nations. Nothing could prove better that these nations have not yet gone beyond the animal stage. In fact, as long as they remain there, each one of them will become in his turn the prey of the strongest. For which one can always remain the strongest?

But just the very play of their egoisms, stimulating them through the trials they inflict

on one another, is tending to make them pass from the animal stage to the human stage of progress. Thus for them the law of brutal conflict, the law of the jungle, is giving way before that of mutual aid and brotherly coöperation. The struggle for life is changing into union for life. After the wild beast era, the society of nations.

The whole history of nations tends to that goal. It is a long effort to prepare them for it. Through peace, through war, they have approached, they have embraced one another. The earth has become smaller for them, and everywhere the world wears the same face. They have exchanged their worst and their best. Their lasting possessions are general possessions; for which of them has to-day the monopoly of science, art or thought? Centuries of work and conflict have, with or without consent, intermarried their races, their civilizations and their creeds. Even their hates have united them. On all the battlefields of the world, victors or vanquished, they have mingled their life, they have mingled their dead. They have cemented in blood an unsought-for brotherhood. Hate is but the wrong side of



love, its first and obscure challenge. It creates an intimacy still deeper perhaps than that of treaties and alliances. It too, by dark and deviating paths, leads the peoples towards their unity. One day they will hate that which made them hate one another.

It is when their conflicts separate them that they learn how close they are to one another. The number and strength of their ties are revealed when they break them. And the range of those ties which was unsuspected before becomes now apparent. The most indifferent among those nations who believe themselves to be only spectators of the struggle, are undergoing the experience that the whole body is affected when one of its members is wounded.

Never did the solidarity of this body assert itself as to-day. The magnitude of the present war gives the measure of the unification of present humanity. There is no domain of human life which is untouched and untroubled by its reverberations. It is the general crisis in which the whole world feels that its destinies are being worked out, and that the former conditions of the life of men and nations will be changed. For a new era is beginning.

. . . A great wave of life has swept over the world. It started from Europe, vivified America, and then awakened sleeping Asia. Happy the nations who are able to sleep their long dreamless night of rest after their long days of labour. For the others die.

Now the wave of life, having encircled the earth, has returned to Europe: there it has changed into a wave of fire. It is consuming racial pride. For Europe must renounce her contempt for that which is alien to her. It is consuming national pride; for the nations must learn not to wish themselves masters of one another, but servers of Humanity.

Progress, it is true, exacts service from those who refuse to serve it. And after having put them to its service, it destroys them. The dominating empires of the past were its blind and unconscious instruments. And they were destroyed in turn. It is the same for those of to-day. They have been, in their unjust undertakings, at work for human unity without desiring it. Now it is at work in them in its turn, for everything in them which hinders that unity must be destroyed. And here is what will be the fruit of this work:

Since it is the unity of nations which is being prepared through the effort of the centuries, since this unity is the principle and goal of all progress, the supreme progress—only those whose anarchic sovereignties have evolved into the service of this unity will henceforth be called the nations of progress.

It is the consciousness of this unity which measures the degree of culture and civilization of a race. Only those men or nations will henceforth be honoured with the name of civilized, who have united to cement the new, the only lasting and pacific alliance, of man with man, and of all nations in Humanity.

## THE CHARTER OF THE NATIONS

WHAT man is in the nation, the nation is in Humanity. Having the same duties as man, it has also the same rights. And those rights that France formerly had the glory to proclaim for the citizen, must now be proclaimed for the nations, citizens of the world. The three principles that she inscribed on the frontal of modern life, summing up the charter of the individual, must now be inscribed on the threshold of the coming time, to sum up the charter of the nations.

Liberty, Equality, Fraternity !

Liberty ! Small or great, all nations must be free. Only those are great which do great things for Humanity. And why should not the small nations do still greater things than the great ?

Free to exist. Free to have an independent existence, or to form groups if they wish. This

liberty is the only foundation, the only guarantee of the rights of nationalities. And these rights are the same for all; for the nations of Africa and Asia, as well as for those of Europe and America.

Free to grow each after its kind, to evolve each after its own genius. When even a single nation is prevented from expressing one of the many aspects, one of the many potentialities of Humanity, Humanity is impoverished.

Free to live and organize themselves in their own way. Unity is not uniformity: all constitutions are admissible.

Let all nations be. And let them be what they will. Let them form groups and organize themselves as they please, so long as each of them or each of their groups, however great it may be, serves that which is greater than itself: the common mother-country, Humanity!

Equality! All nations are equal in rights. All are equal before Right. This equality is the mutual guarantee of their liberty. All are sponsors for it. For civilized nations, as for civilized men, injustice done to one is an injury to the rights of all. It must be felt as such by all.

So much the more as the one who suffers this injustice is weak.

There can be no civilized men or nations without Justice; without equal justice for all. And before this Justice the rights of the weakest are as strong as those of the strongest. For strength is not the measure of rights. There are rights superior to those of strength, rights which limit those of strength.

The civilized man or nation cannot use strength against the weak. No one can dispense justice to himself. The only available justice is that which is assured by all to all.

Being equal in rights, all are equal too in the representation of their rights. All have an equal right of participation in the law which judges them, an equal right in the sovereignty of the supreme Nation of which they form part.

Thus it is not only a few peoples who must take their place in the Parliament of Humanity. It is *all* the peoples. All those of goodwill; the small and the great, the rich and the poor, the enslaved nations as well as the master nations. For there will be no more slaves or masters. Besides, what have these last to fear? If their mastery be legitimate, they need no other

privilege to establish it than that of knowledge and wisdom. Greater than the power of weapons is the power of Spirit. What if they are a minority among the nations? It is the minorities, the élite, who lead the world. As long as they are the élite, they will continue to lead it. But this will be possible only with Justice, in Fraternity.

Fraternity! Mutual respect, benevolence. Countries are sisters. The earth is their common mother. And however different their skies may be, the same sun shines on them all. Whatever be the soil that has fallen to their lot, they advance towards the same goal. Why should they not end by recognizing one another?

Until now, love for the mother-country has meant, if not hate, at least contempt or indifference for the others. And yet they are all but the expression, varied in a hundred ways, of the one and common mother-country, Humanity. He alone loves his country with a true love, who sees in it the living image of Humanity. But how then should he not see its image also in the others? The day is coming when every man will learn to treat as his own country all the countries

of the earth, to recognize in any country he goes to one of the sacred homes of the human family. And thus, to fulfil in this home the duty not only of the stranger towards his host, but of the friend towards his friend, the duty of a son in one of his mother's homes.

Then there will be no more spies on the earth. . . .

The nations will no longer keep in one another's countries, well-known and unknowable personages, skillful in deceiving and elaborately trained in the art of being deceived, occupied in doing discreetly indiscreet work. Instead of enemies in disguise, they will exchange sponsors of mutual friendship. Their official representatives will no longer be more or less clever brokers of the life of the nations, more or less lucky players of their interests. They will be the wise and truthful counsellors, the delegates of the common good, whose high assembly, in each nation, will take on the importance of a council of Humanity.

Is this too idealistic? Is it asking too much of the nations to-day, to be civilized nations, putting into practice the principles of the civilized man, and thus liberating one another from the





yoke of barbarism which is weighing them down?

Outside these principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, there is no future for all the present nations, except servitude, mutual abasement and war.

Outside this Republic of free, equal and fraternal nations, there is in fact no alternative save the construction of a few tremendous and despotic groups, rival portions of Humanity, of which the existing empires would be but cornerstones, and the small or big nations, the constrained and discrowned subjects. There would prevail among these groups a state of permanent conflict, such that the present war, terrible though it is, would be but a mere prelude, a first episode, a reduced outline. . . .

The path followed by the nations is leading them there. And already are looming on their horizon the monstrous silhouettes of these plurinational organisms, these political and military "diplodoci" in formation.

But Nature does not like monsters. She only creates them for momentary and special purposes; those of the geological ages were not a

success. And those that the giant 'combines' of nations are trying to create to-day will not succeed any better. As soon as their useful work is finished they will disappear.

They are born in order to prepare the nations for something better. They have raised up before them their threatening shadow, so that all may know what fate awaits them if they do not stop on their evil way. In absorbing for a time some part of the anarchic sovereignty of the nations, they have compelled their egoism to take the first step towards the future solidarity of the Republic of the peoples. They have made out of the present conflict what it had to be: frightful enough to serve forever as a lesson to all; destructive enough to break down in all the resistance of the past; so world-wide that to all the nations of the world can be proclaimed the charter of their future.

They have now but to choose: iron-chained alliances of war and mutual destruction, or the free alliance of peace between all—to create together.





All the jurists of Europe have legislated, creating tribunals of peace so that the arbitrament of right could replace that of force, and drawing up regulations of war to introduce right even into force. Never was right so outrageously violated by force as since then.

In all countries the workers had united against war. They had sworn mutually to rebel in case of conflict. Their "international" was a guarantee of peace. Now they are slaughtering one another, excited to carnage by the same leaders as formerly preached fraternity.

In short, all the nations, in order to exercise war, multiplied their agreements and their alliances. Never had so many treaties bound them to the "maintenance of the peace." And now, the unclean spirit of war, driven away on all sides, "goeth unto the dry places and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself." At present, fourteen nations are assassinating one another.

Pacifism flattered itself that it had allies in the growing economical materialism and even in the excess of modern armaments. Under this reign of the God of the shop-keepers, the battle-fields of the future would be the business markets ;

the only possible war, the quite pacific one of commercial competition: the only victories those of produce. Indeed the world of gain has led the world. And led it to its ruin. The economical war is now costing Europe all the thousands of millions of its peoples and twenty millions of deaths.

The produce has devoured the producer.

Finally, it was argued, the power of destruction of the modern machines would inspire such dread as to compel men to remain at peace: for the last twenty-five months Gehenna is at work, letting loose on the earth all the torments of hell, torturing with a thousand tortures men and elements. And the war lingers and spreads. Why ?

Why this great failure of European pacifism ? First because it was *only* European. What was desired by the peoples, their jurists and their diplomats, their workmen and their emperors, was not Peace ; it was not the true Peace of all with all, but only *their own* peace, egoistical and false, an impossible peace.

At the Hague there were judges. But their justice was not for the unfortunates whose far-off lands were coveted. Their regulations did not

prohibit, as contrary to the rights of nations and the honour of civilized people, armed aggression against defenceless populations, provided they were of another colour. And when those things occurred, hardly a socialist dreamed of rebelling. In fine, there was no alliance for peace which did not comprise for each one an assurance of a "free hand" on some new colonial hunting-ground. The pacifists did not worry about it: that took place beyond their pacific horizon. They ignored but one thing: and that,—the sword which strikes will be struck.

The only possible and lasting peace is that conferred *by all on all*. As long as one nation in the world can suffer from the evil of war, the others will not have peace. Europe wanted peace in Europe, while through her plans blood would have flowed elsewhere. She has not had, and will not have, that peace. It will be in vain that the present belligerents sign it among themselves, if they do not sign it with the rest of the world, if their future congress is not that of Humanity. For Peace belongs only to Humanity. Humanity alone can give it to her nations, when from the midst of their assembly she rises supreme!



First liberate your slaves, that they may sit with you; or speak no more of peace.

But above all, liberate your hearts. From them come peace and war. Of what use all the enterprises of pacifism when peace is not in the hearts of men? War comes and sweeps them away.

Institutions, legislations, courts of arbitration, international agreements, conventions and leagues, increase of mutual exchange, progress in relations between peoples, peace-bringing efforts and circumstances: so many obstacles and dams in the way of the destructive torrent. . . . The torrent passed, sweeping away these things. The more they had accumulated in its way, the more its flood swelled and the greater became the devastation. What was needed was to go to its source. But these things did not reach there. Their work was exterior. They organized peace from without. Peace could not be born of them. No organization from without will ever prevent war, for it is from within that it comes. War has its root in man, in his lack of respect for man, in his disdain of Humanity. There is the source from which the stream of blood is gushing forth on to the earth. There too will be found the possible obstacle capable of making war for

ever impossible. Without this obstacle, interior and psychological, all the others, exterior, will only raise up illusory impossibilities, phantoms of peace, hiding the living spectre of war.

All the false scenery has fallen, and all the false hopes too. It was not sufficient to pacify the old things; to appease is not peace. Pacifism succumbs with them. But its very defeat reveals to it the secret of true victory. To obtain this it lacked the flaming Sword "which penetrates even to the joints"; war is forging it; this flaming Sword will destroy the bloody weapon itself.

What empires and religions in the past were unable to do, what the works of civilization in the present have attempted in vain, what all the centuries have desired and prepared for, one thing will accomplish, one new thing: the awakening in man of a consciousness of Humanity. In *all* will be pronounced the word which disarms.

Then, from the heart of man will be born the Peace of the world.

## THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF HUMANITY

A VOICE comes across the centuries. It comes from the remoteness and the depths of the conscience. All have heard it, but none listen to it. Neither can any stifle it. It dictates the imperious, sovereign, formidable command: "Thou shalt not kill."

Another voice is raised from the earth, a cry of terror. . . . Oh, the horrors, the abominations of war! Unnamable things. All the crimes man commits against man. What monster then is hiding behind the human face? And how are these things possible in spite of all the progress of a civilized world, nay, even in proportion to all that progress?

Why are these things possible? Simply because in every town, in every village, in every hamlet of this civilized world, there are schools where little children come to sit, and a master who teaches them that the highest duty of man is the duty dictated by the national interest, that when this interest orders it, the murder of

## INTRODUCTION

THE peoples are living beings. They have their distinct personalities. Therefore the French and the Germans, who not only live in close neighbourhood, but also contain in themselves in a large measure a racial similarity, have their individual differences that cannot be overlooked.

But the nations are not living beings, they are organizations of power. Their physical and mental aspects are monotonously the same everywhere. Their differences are merely the differences in degree of efficiency. When by some chance, through some cracks, the human personality sends up its own life shoots, the hard consistency of organization suffers, but the people finds its own manifestation. But where the subjugation of humanity by the machine is complete, there the Nation is triumphant. In the modern world the fight is going on between the living spirit of the people and the methods of Nation organizing. It is like the struggle that went on in Central Asia, between man's cultivated area

man by man becomes a virtuous act, and that they must rather obey the chief who says "kill," than the conscience which says "thou shalt not kill."

Yes, because from his childhood he is taught to think thus, every man in every nation is ready to become one day an assassin, a butcher of his brother. And thence there is no impossible crime. There are no limits to the horrors of war.

For where begins and where ends this horror? Do you let loose a wild beast and ask it to be human? It is good that war, far from becoming humanized, should have made itself so foul. Man was not sufficiently disgusted with it. He honoured human slaughter. All that dishonours it in his eyes is preparing the day when to kill will become for him the impossible, when the old madness will no longer be.

Not to kill. In no case, under no pretext. Thus will war be killed.

As long as this command suffers from any restriction, as long as men can think that they are allowed to kill when numerous, that collective assassination is more respectable than individual

murder, and that individual murder becomes glorious for him who receives pay and a uniform, war will be. War with all its atrocities.

As long as the civilized man has not cleared his heart and thought of the homicidal germs put there by the false values of education, the immoralities of its very morality; as long as it seems moral for educators to fill the child's eyes and brain with glorified pictures and stories of war, with obsessions of human massacre; as long as the preëminent crime is not branded as a crime, and the death stroke as the most immoral of all, this stroke of death will strike, merciless, on the nations.

More than that; for to school-lessons are added object lessons. So long as the social law—which gives the example—is the first to infringe the human law; so long as it does not respect man even in the guilty, and human life even in that of the criminal; so long as its punishments are modelled on the crime, and so long as to the hidden crime of one it replies coldly, basely, with the public crime of all, it is on all that will fall, in a shower of blood, the blood that has been shed. And legal murder, the death of the guilty, will have for penalty

the death sentence inflicted by war on millions of innocents.

This is the ultimatum that Humanity addresses to the nations.

One day these things will be no more. For the voice which says: "Thou shalt not kill," is no longer an alien voice, which comes from outside. It rises from the heart of the multitude. It becomes in all the living voice of Humanity. It gives to men a new command. It teaches them a higher duty, the human duty.

Until now, the highest duty was that of man to the mother-country. But there is, above all the others, a mother-country, greater and nobler and more immortal, more misknown, too, more disinherited, possessing fifteen hundred million inhabitants, yet counting but few citizens; a mother-country without lovers. Henceforth it is towards her that man will have his highest duty. For she is the supreme mother-country: Humanity.

In the course of centuries of progress, he had learned to place the national and patriotic interests above his family interests, to love his country more than his family, to sacrifice him-

self and his family to the mother-country. He must now go further. He must learn to place human interests above patriotic interests, to love Humanity with a love yet wider and purer than that which he has for the mother-country; to sacrifice himself not to what is this country, but to what she must be in Humanity.

As this greater home which is the mother-country has become conscious in him, so must the consciousness of this World-home of all homes, Humanity, become living in him.

None is truly man but he in whom lives this consciousness of Humanity, whom the sense of the human teaches to think: "First of all I am man; then English, German, Russian, Japanese. I am man in Humanity before being patriot in the mother-country. First of all I owe my allegiance to my duty as man. The duty of the citizen comes next."

And the first law of man is the respect for Humanity in all men and for human life above all things. The first of all the commandments for man is: "Thou shalt not kill."

To die for one's country is greater than to live for one's family; but still greater than being



killed for her is to abstain from killing. In no case, under no pretext.

There are men, in this war, who have fulfilled this human duty. They have let themselves be killed. But they have not killed. They died with exalted heart and unsullied hands, for Humanity.

They live in Humanity, and like Humanity, from age to age.

For Humanity is a living Being. Blind are those who only see in her an abstraction. Like men, like nations, she is a real being, conscious of herself, even when men and nations are not conscious of her. She is the common Mother who surpasses and embraces them all, who bears them in her womb; the life of all is dependent on her life. It is the torrent of her forces which animates the nations. It is the blood of Humanity which circulates in all.

And this living being has a living body of which the nations are the organs. For all are members one of another. She has a heart living though asleep in the heart of men; for they have not yet learnt to love so widely.

Now must be created the thinking head of this living body. And for that must be assembled

from all the nations of the earth the men who think the thought of Humanity. It is they who will one day lead the nations.

If the concentration of the powers of cities, in giving birth to the modern nations, could create and transform so many things, what new prodigies will not be accomplished by this still more powerful concentration of all the forces of Humanity? Having attained her unification, become mistress of her destinies, liberated from the bonds of inferior existence, she will create the conditions of her new life; she will create the new man whose advent all Nature awaits. She will realize the immemorial hopes, the everlasting dreams, the painful dreams of earthly future and joy. . . .

Man! demented, who to-day art tearing thyself with thine own hands, torturing thyself unto death, the hour is come to heal thy ills, in awaking to consciousness.

Nations! living members of a body which is ignorant of itself, members bleeding through one another, the hour is come to put an end to your mutual martyrdom, in becoming conscious that you are but one and the same flesh. Awaken to Humanity!

And thou, Divine Being who sleepest in the  
bosom of men and of nations, the hour is come.

Awake, Humanity!

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